

History of

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Wilmington, North Carolina

1858 to 1958



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P. Hess

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St. Paul's
Evangelical Lutheran Church

WILMINGTON
NORTH CAROLINA

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1858

1958

This history of St. Paul's Church was prepared by Mr. Paul Hess, Co-chairman of the History Committee, at the request and with the valuable assistance of the other members of the Committee.

—J. Frank Davis, D.D., Pastor.

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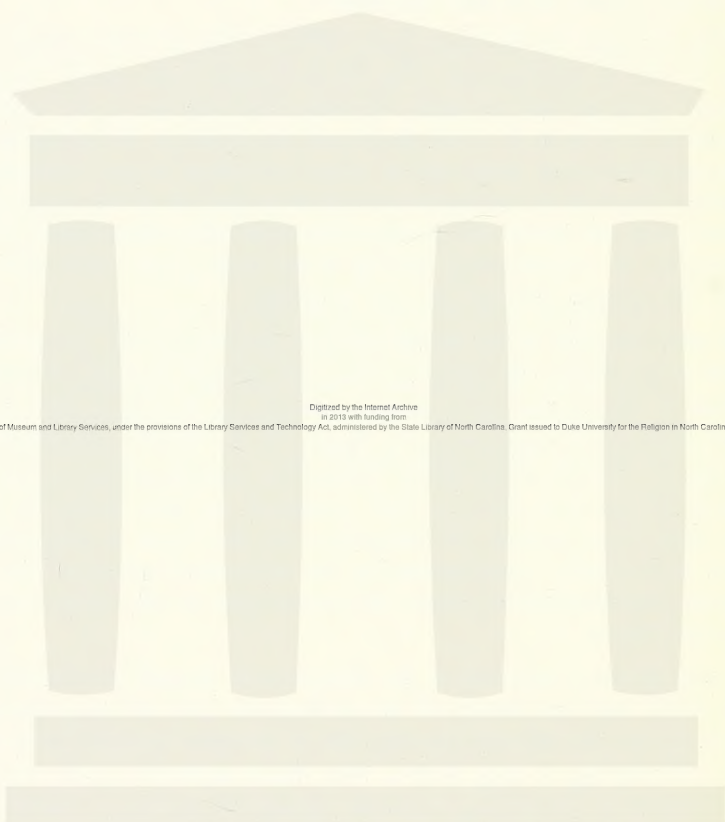
Foreword

In the following pages will be found a somewhat condensed history of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Wilmington, N. C., from the organization of the church to the end of The First One Hundred Years. Although some incidents have regretfully been omitted in order to keep the length of the story within prescribed limits, it is believed all the major events have been included.

The first part of the story, from 1858 to 1879, is based almost wholly upon Dr. G. D. Bernheim's "*The First Twenty Years of the History of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wilmington, N. C.*", which was printed in 1879 by S. G. Hall, Book and Job Printer, Wilmington, N. C. This pamphlet, now long out of print, contained a very complete and detailed record of the inception and gradual growth of the congregation, as well as of the many discouragements and difficulties which at times confronted the membership during those early years. Very few copies of Dr. Bernheim's history are still available.

It was necessary to record the story of the subsequent years—the long period from 1879 to the present—with even greater brevity. In the preparation of the earlier parts of this period the *Historical Sketch of St. Paul's Lutheran Congregation* by Pastor W. A. Snyder, published about 1908 by the Fiftieth Anniversary Committee, and the *History of St. Paul's Sunday School from 1858 to 1929*, prepared by Mrs. Ruby W. Miller, have been very helpful. Of assistance also has been a compilation of events in St. Paul's congregation by the *Historical Survey of the Works Progress Administration*, under the supervision of Mr. Harry Z. Clowe, Research Editor.

Many present members of the church have assisted the Committee in their work, and the thanks of the Committee and the congregation are especially due Mr. Eduard Ahrens, one of the older members and Church Treasurer during a long period, who made available many documents and pamphlets containing valuable historical material which he had carefully preserved through the years.



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The Founding and First Pastorate

During the decade from 1840 to 1850 quite a large number of German settlers came to Wilmington, N. C., and within the next few years the German population of the city had become sufficiently numerous that they were able to organize themselves into a military company under the name of "The German Volunteers." Fifty-seven officers and men comprised the company. During the War Between the States these German volunteers, who in the good old days before the war reflected so much credit upon themselves and upon our city, were among the first to volunteer for the defense of the State, and, as Company A of the 18th North Carolina Regiment, they "bore a record of which one might be proud."

The Lutheran Synod of North Carolina, learning of the presence of a considerable population of German people in Wilmington, decided that Wilmington might be a fruitful field for missionary activity. With enough Germans to organize a military company of their own, there should be enough Lutherans among them to organize a church.

Accordingly at a meeting of Synod held at St. Paul's church, Alamance County, in the year 1858, the following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved, That the President of Synod, the Rev. Joseph A. Linn, with the Rev. G. D. Bernheim be a committee of visitation to inquire into the number and wants of the German and English Lutherans in Wilmington and New Bern, and report to the next meeting of Synod."

Prompt action was taken by this committee of two, and their report to Synod of conditions existing in Wilmington, as published in the *Lutheran Observer* on June 6, 1858, follows:

In visiting Wilmington we were surprised to find such a large number of Germans there, estimated to be between four and five hundred, a large portion of which are Lutherans manifesting a strong attachment to the church of their fathers, free from all destructive elements of Rationalism, possessed of much wealth and refinement, and who also exhibit a spirit of enlarged Christian liberality.

After visiting two days among the Lutheran brethren, preaching in both the German and English languages, a meeting was

appointed for Monday, May 31st, to organize a Lutheran church, at which time a large number were assembled, and fifty-eight persons enrolled themselves as members of the church. We were informed that inasmuch as many members were absent at that season on a visit to Germany and a number of others in and about Wilmington whom we could not then see, the number of communion members of the newly organized church may be very safely estimated at eighty or more.

So great was the interest which our brothers felt in the cause that they resolved to purchase at once a suitable lot, build a church, and call a pastor as quickly as possible, promising to raise about \$500 or \$600 salary for the first year.

The warmest thanks were tendered, through us, to the Synod for the interest manifested in their spiritual welfare and for our labor in their midst. Great pains were taken to make our stay amongst them pleasant and agreeable, so much so that our visit to Wilmington shall never be effaced from our memory.

From the above report of the committee the fact is established that the organization of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wilmington, N. C., was effected on Monday, May 31, 1858. The place of this first meeting was the old Presbyterian Church on Front Street, subsequently destroyed by fire. Thus began a friendship between the Lutherans and the Presbyterians in this community which has since been increased by mutual acts of kindness and Christian fellowship.

Following the initial accomplishments in Wilmington by the Rev. Linn and the Rev. Bernheim, a search was begun by the President of the Missionary Society of the North Carolina Synod for a suitable Missionary to be sent to this promising field, and the minds of the Executive Committee of the Missionary Society were at length directed to the Rev. John H. Mengert of Evansville, Indiana, who was a man of learning, able to conduct services in German or English, and, moreover, had been a missionary in India for a number of years.

The Rev. Mengert accepted the call to the field in Wilmington, arriving with his family on December 23, 1858. He began his labors among the German people at once and succeeded so well that on February 8th following his arrival a meeting was held in the Presbyterian Church at which time the following officers of the Church Council were elected: Trustees, Messrs. J. C. Bauman, H. B. Eilers, C. H. Vollers and H. Vollers; Elders, Messrs. N. Bremer and A. Adrian; Deacons, Messrs. W. Knohl and H. Rehder. All of these individuals accepted their appointment and thus became the first officers of the congregation. The trustees were empowered to select and procure a suitable building for divine services.

Meetings of the Church Council were held on February 10th and 15th, 1859, and a report of the important business transacted at these meetings is furnished in a letter of the Rev. Mengert to the President of the Missionary Society, dated February 23, 1859. Following is a copy of this letter:

I have only time to state that at the first meeting of our vestry it was resolved to rent the session house of the St. James Protestant Episcopal Church and fix it up for the regular service to be held in it. This has been done and preparations are in progress to enable us to occupy the house on next Sabbath.

At the same meeting the Trustees were instructed to look out for a suitable location to build on, and to report to the vestry as soon as possible. Consequently a second meeting was held on Tuesday, the 15th instant, at which the Trustees recommended a certain lot on Market Street, near Sixth, as the best and cheapest site for the church. The price asked for the lot was \$3,000, but as it was large, we might sell part of it again, if it should be deemed desirable and necessary. They were then instructed to buy the lot, which they did that very evening, soliciting from the owner a subscription toward building a church, and obtained \$500, so the lot cost us only \$2,500.

Under the supervision of Pastor Mengert a committee framed a constitution for the congregation which was adopted March 27, 1859. The signatures of seventy-two persons were affixed thereto, and those persons may therefore be regarded as charter members of the church. Their names, as they appear in the minutes of the meeting, are recorded below:

Rev. John H. Mengert
Mrs. John H. Mengert
H. B. Eilers and wife
C. Turner
Elise Turner
Catherine Ebbender
Therese Klary
Helene Vathauer
Margarethe Schulken
Engelhard Schulken
Emilie Polvogt
C. Polvogt
L. Vollers
Johanne Kordlander
C. VonGlahn
J. VonGlahn

John M. Bremer
Anne Hons
Louise Doscher
Ferdinand Eyden
Carston H. Vollers
Mrs. Carston H. Vollers
D. Cortjohann and wife
Henrich Markman
J. C. Litjen
E. T. Suden and wife
L. C. Turner
H. Vollers and wife
A. Henze
B. Schulken
H. Rathjen
J. G. Bauman

W. Ulrich
 K. H. Genzer
 N. Bremer and wife
 C. Bonck
 A. Adrian
 H. Rehder
 W. Knohl and wife
 H. VonGlahn
 W. Runge
 Johanne Runge
 Doris Mugge
 H. Kordlander
 Friedrich Henning
 H. Eckel
 J. C. Koch

C. Stemmerman and wife
 Hinrich Haar
 Heinrich Heisenbittel
 A. W. Thies
 N. Gerken and wife
 H. G. Hashagen
 R. Turner
 John Von der Lieth
 Mrs. John Von der Lieth
 A. Mindel
 Carolina Wilkins
 R. Mehrtens
 G. Steenken and wife
 John Hespe and wife
 George Hespe

At a meeting of the North Carolina Synod held in Concord, N. C., April 30, 1859, St. Paul's church was received as a member of the Synod, and appropriations were made by the Missionary Society of the Synod to aid the congregation in the support of their pastor.

From the minutes of this Synodical meeting it is learned that the efforts of the pastor met with considerable difficulty and opposition, but nevertheless success crowned his labors, and the members of the church are praised for having "shown a commendable spirit of benevolence and interest in the matter of purchasing a suitable lot and the commencement of a church edifice." It was further stated that "the service of the sanctuary is well attended and the prospect is good of seeing a large and influential congregation in the city."

As early as June, 1859, Mr. H. Vollers submitted a plan for a Gothic church, 65 by 40 feet, with a vestry room in the rear, 30 by 16 feet, the estimated cost of the proposed structure being from \$5,000 to \$6,000. This plan was adopted and a building committee, composed of Messrs. E. Schulken, H. B. Eilers, E. VonGlahn, E. Knohl and H. Vollers, was instructed to proceed at once with the erection of the church.

After Pastor Mengert had made some collections in Charleston, S. C., for the building of the church, in which he was accompanied and assisted by Mr. H. VonGlahn, the good work progressed rapidly and on September 6, 1859, the cornerstone was laid. An account of the laying of the stone, as it appeared the following day in the *Wilmington Journal*, follows:

In accordance with previous announcement the impressive ceremony of laying the corner stone of a new house of worship

for the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of this place was witnessed by a goodly assembly yesterday afternoon at 4 o'clock.

The site of the church is on the north side of Market Street, above Sixth, a pleasant location and in a very desirable neighborhood. The dimensions of the edifice to be erected are 40 by 65 feet, with a vestry room in the rear, 30 by 16 feet.

It is estimated that 250 persons can obtain convenient sitting room on the ground floor. There will be an organ gallery on the south end, over the vestibule, which, besides accommodating the organ and choir in the centre, will afford seats for some 25 persons on each side, appropriated to the colored population of the congregation.

The exercises of the occasion were conducted by Rev. Mengert, the pastor of the church, who read a portion of scripture (the 96th Psalm) sang a hymn of the Lutheran Church, and offered up a prayer appropriate to the occasion.

Mr. Mengert then proceeded to make some remarks explanatory of the doctrines, discipline and character of the Lutheran Church, which he said was the oldest and most numerous of all the Protestant denominations, numbering some forty millions, and dating from the earliest dawn of the Reformation under Martin Luther; much of the earlier ritual and doctrine of the Episcopal Church of England being derived from those furnished by Luther. The number of Lutheran churches in this country is small compared with some other denominations, owing chiefly to the fact of a want of German ministers. There were, however, over 1,200 pastors and 2,000 congregations in the United States. Although there were many persons of the Lutheran persuasion in Wilmington, there had long been an insuperable difficulty in organizing a congregation and obtaining a place of worship. The difficulties had at length been overcome. Not only the members of the congregation, but other citizens of the town had come forward in a spirit of liberality to assist in the erection of the house of worship, the corner stone of which they were now about to lay. He invoked the blessing of God upon them.

As to the doctrine and discipline of the Lutheran Church, Mr. Mengert mentioned the doctrinal text books, among others the Augsburg Confession, etc. The discipline, he said, was strictly republican, through local and general Synods. They were strict believers in the necessity of infant baptism, and had also the rite of confirmation.

Mr. Mengert then proceeded to read a declaration intended to be deposited in the cavity of the stone. Said declaration set forth the day and date, together with the names of the President of the United States, of the Governor of the State, of the Mayor and Commissioners of the town of Wilmington, the of-

ficers and members of the church (some 75 in number), the building committee, builder, &c., and also a list of articles to be deposited along with it, to wit:-

One copy of the Holy Scriptures; one do. of Augsburg Confession; one of Luther's Catechism; one Lutheran Hymn Book (English), with form of Discipline; one Lutheran Hymn Book (German); one Lutheran Almanac for 1859; one copy of Lutheran Observer; one do. of Lutheran Missionary; one do. of do. Miscellany (German); one do. of Wilmington Journal, Daily and Weekly; one do. of Wilmington Herald, Daily and Weekly; specimens of United States coin.

Mr. Mengert then proceeded to deposit these articles in the tin box prepared for them, which box was placed in the cavity of the Corner, invoking the blessing of Almighty God upon the building to be reared in His honor.

The Rev. Colin Shaw, of Bladen County, concluded the service with Prayer.

Thus has been recorded in considerable detail the early beginning of our beloved church. All honor to the first supporters of the good cause; their labors should ever be held in grateful remembrance.

Externally everything seemed to progress quite well, but it is difficult and slow work to build up "the inner temple" in the heart. At the close of this first year the pastor writes, "It is now a year since I have commenced my labors here. I see a mass of brick and mortar designed for a church, but around these walls the dry bones are scattered, and the question, 'Can these bones live?' presents itself again and again to my mind. Sometimes I am cheered by indications of success, but then everything seems to have vanished again. Under these circumstances the promises of Scripture are sweet, precious and cheering."

At the annual meeting of the congregation held on February 18, 1860, it was, "Resolved, That if the Trustees deem it advisable they be empowered to purchase the corner lot adjoining the church property at as low a price as possible." Advantage having been taken of the necessity of the congregation to make the purchase, the large sum of \$2,700 had to be paid. Although this brought the cost of the land owned by the congregation to \$5,700, the purchase of this additional lot has never been regretted.

At the meeting of Synod held at Sandy Creek Church in Davidson County, Pastor Mengert submitted a report of the financial condition of St. Paul's as follows:

Cost of church lot.....	\$ 5,700
Estimated cost of church edifice.....	7,500
Total.....	13,200

Of this sum \$6,200 has been received and paid, leaving a balance of \$7,000 to be raised.

Pastor Mengert added:

Our indebtedness, at the present, is about \$3,450, namely, \$2,700 on the adjoining lot which we were compelled to purchase, and \$750 on the church as it *now* stands. If we are to complete the church before next meeting of Synod, we must then raise the sum of \$3,600; and even then there will be a debt of \$3,500 remaining.

The above calculation is made on the supposition that the church is to be finished in the simplest style possible. No allowance is made for fencing the lot, or the introduction of gas, etc., so that you see we are greatly in need of help from the churches belonging to our Synod.

Members of Synod responded, Shall our worthy brother plead in vain for his infant and needy congregation? Shall the want of a few thousand dollars retard the good work, already begun with so much prospect of success, in planting a Lutheran church on the seaboard, and in the largest city of the Old North State? Surely such will not be the case. Let pastors and people strive to excel in contributing to this very laudable undertaking.

Resolved, That we heartily approve of the enterprise of our Missionary at Wilmington, Rev. J. H. Mengert, and that we further manifest our sympathy by bringing the condition of the church building to the notice of our several congregations, with the view of affording material aid.

The work on the exterior of the building progressed rapidly, the walls went up, the steeple was completed, and before the year closed the church was covered with a slate roof; but the interior remained unfinished for a long period of time.

Pastor Mengert collected money where he could obtain hearing and find willing hearts, in New Bern, Goldsboro and the interior of the State, among the brothers of the Lutheran faith. In a letter dated August 8, 1860, he states: "I have been to New York lately, and collected a little above \$300 there. If I could have gone in the Fall, I should have been able to raise double that amount."

On December 27, 1860, the constitution of the church was revised and 200 copies printed in the German language. The signatures of 98 members were affixed to this constitution.

It was the fond hope of the congregation to have their house of worship so nearly completed as to be ready for dedication by the time Synod met in May, 1861. This would have been a joyful occasion long to be remembered—on the part of Synod, because this would have been

its first convention in the city of Wilmington, and on the part of the congregation to have so large an assembly of ministers at their "feast of dedication"; and for a time it seemed this hope would be realized. But the great change that came over the entire Nation as the War Between the States began, introduced an almost insuperable difficulty. Church enterprises all fared badly; money that had been promised could not be collected; new subscriptions could not be obtained.

At the congregational meeting held on February 18, 1861, it was resolved to borrow a few thousand dollars to partially complete the interior of the church. Building material, however, was difficult to obtain. The church had to remain unfinished until a few years after the close of the war. The dedicatory service could not be held until August 22, 1869.

Not quite three weeks before the meeting of Synod in 1861 the battle of Fort Sumter was fought, and, although the hospitable doors of Wilmington were opened to the members of Synod, the minds of the people were chiefly occupied with the more absorbing questions regarding the defense of the country. Many Germans as well as Americans volunteered for military service.

Synod was held in the session house which had been purchased by several members of St. Paul's from the Presbyterian Church. At this meeting of Synod it was again "Resolved, That we heartily approve of the enterprise of Brother Mengert, at Wilmington, and open the doors of our several charges to Bro. M. for substantial aid, whenever it may be deemed practical."

The members of Synod were pleased with their reception and with the progress of our church during its brief existence of two years.

During this year the lecture room in the rear of the church was so far completed that divine service and Sunday School could be held therein.

Human enterprises, even those undertaken for the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God, must often go through periods of discouragement and difficulty. St. Paul's experienced such a period as a result of the war. The effect of this great cataclysm upon the young congregation was most distressing and almost disastrous. When at last the war neared its close and the victorious forces from the North occupied Wilmington, St. Paul's church edifice was used for military purposes, even the troops' horses being stabled therein. Great damage was done to the building and grounds; joists, pews and reading desk were used as fuel in the soldiers' camp fires, while the beautiful steeple, blackened by smoke, soon resembled a huge chimney. With little regard for the sacred

character of the building, the soldiers disfigured the inside walls with all sorts of inscriptions. When the troops were finally ordered away from Wilmington and the members of the church were able to see how their property had fared, the last flicker of hope died, for it seemed impossible to replace their losses and finish the building of the church. Many were in favor of abandoning the whole enterprise at once.

The annual meeting of the congregation was held on February 10, 1862. At this meeting Mr. H. B. Eilers reported, "That our pastor, the Rev. John M. Mengert, had resigned, and that his resignation would become effective on the 2nd of May following." So uncertain did the future appear that the little remnant of the membership entertained no thought of calling a successor to the Rev. Mengert. This was the beginning of that long vacancy lasting seven years and eight months during which the congregation was privileged to hear an occasional sermon but lacked the watchful care and efficient service of a regular pastor.

Pastor Mengert had been successful in establishing the congregation; he seems to have felt, however, that despite his efforts and earnest prayers, or possibly more due to the great losses the congregation had sustained, the spiritual condition among the members of his charge was not encouraging; another preacher might be able to more successfully lead St. Paul's people. To the meeting of Synod in 1862 he reported as follows:

"The state of religion in the Wilmington charge, which is now vacant, has given me considerable concern from the commencement, and will remain a subject of solicitude and prayer with me after my pastoral relation with it has come to a close. May the Great Shepherd of the sheep give unto this people a pastor after His own heart, and may they be brought more and more to realize the importance of our Saviour's declaration: He that heareth you, heareth Me, &c."

From the minutes of the Synods of 1859 to 1863 we learn that the Rev. Mengert received aid from the Missionary Society of the Synod during the entire time of his labors as pastor in Wilmington. The total amount of money thus paid him for the entire period of three years was \$1,200, or an average sum of \$400 annually. In this connection it should be stated also that a large sum of money was contributed by individuals both in the North and in the South toward the building of the church. The names of donors remain, of course, unknown at the time of this One Hundredth Anniversary, but we should remember with gratitude their assistance in the hour of need.

The Rev. Mengert remained in Wilmington a few months after

his labors as pastor had ceased; he was still in the city on July 24th when a meeting of the Church Council was held, at which time he was requested to place the seal of the church in the hands of the Treasurer, Mr. C. Stemmerman. Later Pastor Mengert moved to Tyro, Davidson County, N. C., where he remained until the Fall of 1863 when he moved to Florida. Sometime after the close of the war, in 1870, he moved to Baltimore, Md. He died on October 26, 1876, while still engaged in ministerial work.

As the Rev. Mengert was St. Paul's first pastor, it is of interest to record the following notices of his death as they appeared in the *Wilmington Star* and the *Lutheran and Missionary* of Philadelphia:

Rev. John H. Mengert, a pastor near Baltimore, Md., and for a time, until his health failed, a missionary in India, died Thursday, October 26th, in the 63d year of his age. He was a pious and scholarly man, but long in feeble health. He leaves a widow and son.

Rev. Mr. Mengert was the first pastor of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of this city, from A. D. 1859 to 1862, a period of about three and a half years.

It is my sad duty to call attention to the departure of one of the most worthy and faithful German pastors of our Church; I refer to Rev. J. H. Mengert, of Baltimore County, Maryland. In May it was my privilege to preach the morning sermon, and assist in the consecration of a beautiful new church his flock had just erected. At that time he seemed to be in his usual health. In the course of the early Fall, a rapid consumption developed itself, and on the 26th ult., he closed his career on earth. Bro. M. was a native of Bremen, and received his advanced education at the University of Bonn. He was a brother of excellent spirits, cultivated manners and fine attainments. A scholarly article, in a recent number of the *Quarterly Review*, on the "Chronology of the Hebrew Testament," betrays such an ability in the use of the English language, that no one would suspect his German nationality. Whilst to us it seems the Church can poorly spare her able and faithful servants, a higher will governs her destiny, and we can only pray that the Lord would raise up equally faithful ones, to take up the weapons of warfare as they have laid them down, and do manly work in His cause.

Period of Discouragement and Wavering Faith

The beginning of the long vacancy from 1862 to 1869 was marked by the prevalence of a very severe scourge of sickness in Wilmington. Before the people of the city were aware of it, yellow fever was raging in their midst. The disease was of such a malignant type as to attack both natives and foreigners alike. Many of the most useful citizens were hurried to their untimely graves, and of course many of the German people fell victims to the plague. All the people who could possibly do so fled from the city, and the chief occupation of those who remained and were still able to work, and of those magnanimous strangers who came to the rescue, was caring for the stricken ones and burying the dead.

At this gloomy time the prospect of St. Paul's Church was dark. Only a few members remained in the city, some were in the army, others had already succumbed to the disease, and still others had fled to the interior of the State. The October meeting of the Church Council could not be held as the number of members able to attend was too small for a quorum. The Sunday School had to discontinue its sessions because of a lack of teachers and pupils.

A more healthful situation was restored rather late in this year (1862) to the stricken city, and the surviving members of St. Paul's and those that returned to the city decided not to abandon the work that had been begun. Consequently a regular meeting of the Council was held on January 22, 1863. At this meeting it was resolved to sell the two lots on the corner of Sixth and Princess streets at auction, since no purchaser could be found to take them at a private sale (as before ordered) and to apply the proceeds of the sale toward liquidation of the church debt.

There appears to be no record of the time when these lots were sold at auction, but it certainly was a move in the wrong direction. The church received Confederate money for them which later became worthless, and some years later, about 1869, the lots were repurchased at \$2,500 in good money. The officers of the church responsible for the deal meant well, no doubt, doing what they believed was best for St. Paul's, but they made a very costly mistake.

At the congregational meeting held February 27, 1863, it was resolved that the Sunday School should be re-opened under the same management as formerly. It was also resolved that a committee be appointed to inquire who of St. Paul's members died during the recent epidemic, and to record their names in the church book. This duty could be only partially performed as all the facts were never brought to light.

During the long vacant period the pulpit of St. Paul's was occasionally supplied by ministers of the Eastern Conference of the North Carolina Synod. The congregation was greatly indebted to the initiative of the Rev. John D. Scheck, pastor of St. Paul's Church, Alamance County, who communicated their needs to Synod. That the Eastern Conference contributed faithfully to the spiritual needs of St. Paul's is evidenced by the following item in the report of the President of Synod for 1864:

"The Wilmington mission has been partially supplied by the ministers of the Eastern Conference in rotation, but no prospect of a regular pastor for that people is as yet before them."

During this year (1864) little could be done for the welfare of the church, and everything seemed to be in a prostrated condition. The Sunday School, however, was faithfully maintained by the Superintendent, Mr. H. B. Eilers.

On the 28th of January, 1865, the last meeting of the Church Council was held for that year and part of the next. Nothing was now done that looked toward the perpetuity of the church, and it required only the sale of the church property, which was contemplated by the members, to make St. Paul's congregation another of the many things of the past.

About this time a report was circulated through the interior of the State that the church property had been sold, or was to be sold, which reached the Rev. G. D. Bernheim, who as we saw earlier in this story, was instrumental in the organization of St. Paul's. Pastor Bernheim, then residing in Charlotte, N. C., was so deeply affected by this report that he determined to visit the congregation in Wilmington. Accordingly he arrived during the month of July, 1866, and, learning that the church property had not yet been sold, urged the members to call a meeting of the Church Council at once. This was done on July 14th. At this meeting Dr. Bernheim offered the following resolution, very terse and to the point: "Resolved, That in the name of God, in reliance upon His promises, and in view of our responsibility, we do now take steps for the completion of our church." The resolution was adopted. As a result of Dr. Bernheim's visit the situation took on a more hopeful appearance. Some members even thought the church edifice could be finished within a year.

Further difficulties arose, including the discovery that the cost of material and the difficulty of obtaining labor would be much greater than was at first estimated.

The work of finishing the church was actually not accomplished until July, 1869, at a total cost, including a new fence, of \$7,583. This money was raised as follows:

From the members of the church.....	\$1,395
From the sale of pews to members.....	2,639
From the citizens of Wilmington.....	2,657
From merchants in New York, Baltimore and Philadelphia	892

Additional contributions were made by a number of Wilmington citizens who gave building material, furniture, and books. Mr. W. P. Clyde, proprietor of the Clyde Line, donated \$50 and made no charge for freight on many articles procured in the North, such as stained glass windows, the bell, carpet, etc. The ladies of the congregation, partly by collections and partly by a fair, raised a large sum of money. Messrs. Adrian and Vollers donated the bell, of 1,000 pounds weight, on which are cast the following inscriptions in raised letters:

On one side—

Presented by
Adrian and Vollers
to the

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Wilmington, N. C., 1868

And on the other side—

“I TO THE CHURCH THE LIVING CALL
AND TO THE GRAVE I SUMMON ALL.”

Period of Dedication and Growth

Ten years of anxious waiting, from 1859 to 1869, were now ended, and the church edifice was practically finished. At a meeting of the Council held in July, 1869, it was reported that the church was so far completed that it could be dedicated at any time, whereupon it was, "Resolved, That the Secretary pro tem., Mr. H. G. Hashagen, be instructed to request the Rev. G. D. Bernheim to dedicate the church in the German language, and if possible, that the dedication take place on Sunday, the 22nd of August following. The Secretary was further instructed to invite Revs. C. H. Bernheim, W. A. Julian, D. L. Dreher, L. C. Groseclose, W. H. Cone, B. Rothrock, L. A. Bickle of North Carolina, and Revs. L. Muller and W. B. Bowman of South Carolina to be present and assist in the dedication services."

On Sunday, August 22, 1869, the dedicatory services were held, with four of the above mentioned present, namely, Revs. G. D. Bernheim, C. H. Bernheim, W. A. Julian and L. Muller. The Rev. L. Muller of Charleston, S. C., reported the occasion in the *Lutheran Visitor* as follows:

We had a solemn occasion on Sunday, August 22nd. The German congregation commenced the building of a church ten years ago, and they have now finished the work amidst great difficulties, although they have been for years without a pastor. The writer, who is himself engaged in the erection of a church, and tolerably well acquainted with ecclesiastic architecture, was greatly surprised at the taste, churchliness and beauty of this edifice. Although only sixty-five by forty-five, it has nevertheless a handsome steeple. It is built of bricks and covered with slate laid down in cruciform pattern. The outside could hardly be simpler. The beauty consists in its admirable proportions. The style is Gothic, which we insist is the only legitimate style for German churches, and the interior presents the most elegant church that we have seen this side of the ocean. The pulpit, the altar, the pews, the gallery, only over the vestibule, the lofty ceiling laid off in panels, and the massive roof timbers all in pure Gothic style, are of southern yellow pine, not painted, but varnished. The wood has been so judiciously chosen and carefully selected, that it surpasses in appearance the richest maple. The red cushions and carpeting made an

admirable contrast. But the windows! Also pure Gothic double windows, with rhombs above for emblems—how charming! The light-grey glass with black arabesques and shadings, edgings of blue, red, yellow and green; emblems in kitehead, such as the bible, the cross, the crown, the baptismal fount, the cup, the lamb, the dove, stars, and eyes—it is magnificent. The whole cost about \$18,000, and it is almost paid for. We rejoice together with the congregation over this gem of a church, and trust that they value it as they ought. Four Luthern ministers took part in its consecration in the presence of a large collection of Germans and Americans. The clear, sonorous bell, a present of two of the members, summoned us together at ten o'clock A.M. We passed from the vestibule to the altar, using the liturgical services in German, and Rev. G. D. Bernheim and W. A. Julian, of the Synod of North Carolina, to which St. Paul's belongs, and the undersigned from the Synod of South Carolina, assisted. The Church Council took their position at the altar. The solemn responses of the Pennsylvania Synod's German Liturgy, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, in which all joined audibly, produced a deep impression. We hope that the hearts of everyone present were also consecrated to God during the service, and that they may be temples of the living God.

Rev. G. D. Bernheim preached an English sermon, after the consecration, based on Luke X:23,24. The sermon was appropriate, especially as regards the distinctive prominence given to the Confession and excellencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The writer preached in the afternoon from Psalms XXVI:6,8; and Rev. Julian delivered a sermon at night from Solomon's Song VI:10. The audiences were large and deep impressions were doubtlessly produced. The dear people of Wilmington are, alas! without a minister. They need one who can preach both German and English. May the Lord soon send a good shepherd into this interesting field!

This church proves anew what the activity of one churchly-minded man can accomplish in a congregation. Such a man is Bro. Eilers in Wilmington. He led the ship with a firm hand by every rock, and guided it into the haven of completion. The congregation adopted cheerfully all his propositions and have honorably conquered all their difficulties.

L. Muller

Pastor G. E. L. Church

Charleston, S. C.

Sept. 14, 1869.

During the time the church edifice was in process of completion, the congregation was unwilling to call a pastor, feeling that they would be unable to bear the additional expense. For two months after the dedication the pulpit was supplied once each Sunday by ministers of the

city, and after that time to the close of the year 1869 the Rev. Mr. Andrews, Chaplain of the Seaman's Friend Society, preached regularly each Sunday.

There remained two other things to complete the outfitting of the church: A furnace and an organ. A fine Burdette combination organ, valued at \$650, was procured from the Tremaine Brothers and a Mr. C. John Pierson. As these people wished to dispose of the organ, St. Paul's was fortunate enough to obtain it at very low cost at the conclusion of a musical concert on November 2, 1869. The gross sum realized from the evening's entertainment was donated by the owners of the organ as part payment, and therefore the cost to the church was only \$136.25.

Second Pastorate, and Growth of Christian Organizations

Official action was taken within a few days after the service of dedication to secure a pastor, and at a congregational meeting a resolution was unanimously passed to call the Rev. G. D. Bernheim, of Mount Pleasant, N. C. Dr. Bernheim accepted the call, arriving in Wilmington on December 29, 1869. He commenced his labors on the following Sunday by preaching in German in the morning and in English at night.

The Sunday School was once more reorganized under the superintendence of Mr. H. G. Hashagen, and the following April it was reported as numbering about sixty scholars, with a good corps of officers and teachers.

Pastor Bernheim organized and instructed a class of fifteen catechumens, fourteen of whom were confirmed on Good Friday, April 19, 1870. The names of these first Lutherans to be confirmed in Wilmington, N. C., follow:

Lisette C. Bernheim
Catherine M. Gerken
Charles J. Gerken
William H. Gerken
Anna S. Heins
Margaret E. Heins
Joanna Lemmerman

Anna S. Lessman
Anna Von der Lieth
Caroline T. Strauss
William H. Strauss
Mrs. Caroline Stolter
John H. Tienken
Margaret C. Tienken

Thus was St. Paul's gradually drawn away from the cloud into which it had been plunged by the adversities of war and the ravages of disease. The earnest efforts of Pastor Bernheim were largely responsible for this recovery.

During 1870 and 1871 the large and commodious parsonage was built under the supervision of a building committee consisting of the Rev. G. D. Bernheim and Messrs. H. Haar and B. H. J. Ahrens. A large part of the money required for this project was given by friends of the church, and very liberal contributions of needed material were made by the various lumber mill owners. The total cost of construction was \$4,757.09. Upon its completion and occupation by the pastor and his family, the rent formerly paid for his house, amounting to \$475 annually, was saved.

A special meeting of the congregation was called October 1, 1871, to act upon a friendly farewell letter addressed to the pastor and brethren of St. Paul's by the Rev. H. L. Singleton, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmington on the occasion of his resignation and removal from the city. An extract from this letter reads as follows:

While you brethren were without a shepherd, it was my pleasure often to perform the sacred office of a pastor for you, and I shall always cherish the memory of the time when I have been among your flock.

I have married your young men and maidens, I have baptized your dear children, I have administered to your sick and those in sorrow, and I have performed the last sad offices over your dead, and laid them to rest in their tombs. This has sacredly bound you to my heart; your hospitality in your homes and in your church has been very refreshing and gratifying to me, and the Master of the humble disciple will reward you.

A suitable resolution was adopted in response to the reading of this touching letter from the Rev. Singleton.

On October 22, 1871, an invitation was extended to the male members of the congregation to organize themselves into a Christian Association, for the purpose of enlisting their energies in advancing the Kingdom of Christ. A large number responded to this call, and on the following Sunday, October 29th, the society was organized under the title of "Christian Association of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Wilmington, N. C." Every congregation has male members, not on the council, who can and desire to work for the welfare of the church, and thus do their part in the Master's vineyard.

The year 1873 was one of much prosperity in the pecuniary affairs of St. Paul's. Another fair was held in May which netted over \$1,200,

and the pastor raised nearly \$1,000 more by another effort made abroad; he also donated the profits on the sale of his book during that tour, all of which was paid on the church debt, reducing it to \$2,500. The exterior of the church was stuccoed and other improvements were made at a cost of about \$1,300, raised by subscription among the members of the congregation. In resolutions by the Church Council the ladies and the pastor were thanked for their energy, perseverance and self-sacrifice in raising funds for the liquidation of a large part of the church debt.

Everything connected with the church now had a prosperous appearance; the services were well attended and larger communions were reported. In accordance with an agreement made when he was called, the pastor's salary was raised to \$1,800 a year.

The fifth year of Pastor Bernheim's pastorate (1874) was one of affliction and sorrow. On the first Sunday of the year the funeral of three seamen, including Captain Herman Hinrichson, of the German barkentine "Adolph," was conducted, followed on the next Tuesday by two more, all of whom died by suffocation. They had retired to bed on board their ship well and hearty, but a change in the wind direction during the night caused deadly coal gas from a stove to envelop them. Pastor Bernheim ministered not only to his own flock, but was always prepared to lend a helping hand to any who might need his services.

There were also a number of instances of sudden death among the members of the congregation, causing very much depressed spirits. The death roll of this year and the succeeding three years was unusually large, the membership of the congregation being considerably reduced thereby and by removals from the city.

The universally prevailing money crisis brought hard times. Though liberality was shown to objects of Christian charity within the congregation, yet nothing could be paid on the church debt during this year and the two succeeding years (1875 and 1876).

The North Carolina Synod held its sessions in Wilmington in 1874, for the second time, which afforded the members of Synod an opportunity of seeing what progress had been made by the church since 1861. The Rev. J. Fry, D. D., from Pennsylvania, corresponding delegate to the North Carolina Synod, wrote as follows:

On Saturday morning we appeared before the Synod and had a most cordial welcome as delegate from the old Mother Synod, for which the members of this body cherish great esteem and affection.

We tarried four or five days at Wilmington, N. C., and were glad to notice the Lutheran church here occupies one of the

most central and pleasant locations. The building itself is of good size, well proportioned, and, with the graceful spire, presents a very attractive appearance. The inside work is equally fine, the pews and ceiling being finished in the heavy pine wood for which this State is so famous, and which finishes with a grain fully equal to the best maple wood we ever saw. Rev. C. D. Bernheim is to be congratulated on the work he has accomplished for our church in this city, and for the respect and esteem in which he is held by all classes of citizens. In his congregation are some of the most substantial families of Wilmington. Indeed, we were informed by competent witnesses that in all these seaboard cities of the South, the people of German blood are now the successful merchants and men of business, and are gradually and quietly becoming the masters and people of power. And so far as our Lutheran Church is concerned, we found a state of things we were hardly prepared to see. Somewhere or somehow we had the impression our Church in the South had but little position or influence, and was extremely weak. But if the three congregations we saw and to whom we preached at Charleston, Savannah and Wilmington can be taken as samples, our impressions have been entirely false. Whilst we may have seen many larger congregations in point of numbers, no where in the North have we seen any whose appearance for solid worth, intelligence and religious refinement exceeded these.

Pastor Bernheim's health having suffered from the strain of preaching every Sunday in two languages and other mental toil, he was forced to ask for a rest. The Church Council cheerfully granted him a vacation of one month which he spent among friends in the Valley of Virginia.

During the year 1875 Dr. Bernheim introduced a Wednesday evening lecture, accompanied with divine service. These lectures were continued for about three years, but never well attended and were therefore finally abandoned. A daily service was decided to be held during Passion Week, which seemed to accomplish much good, and these services, usually well attended, have been continued year after year to the present time.

In 1876 there occurred quite a large number of deaths among St. Paul's membership, including some of the most active and valuable members; this, together with continued hard times, had the effect of greatly reducing the income of the church.

At a called congregational meeting on August 20, 1876, it was stated by Mr. H. B. Eilers that even though Pastor Bernheim had voluntarily permitted a reduction of \$200 in his annual salary, due to the need of the congregation, a further reduction would be necessary in order to

meet the current expenses of the church. The Council therefore proposed to Pastor Bernheim that he, with the assistance of his family, start a daily school, its sessions to be held in several rooms of the parsonage. Thus it would be possible for him to permit a reduction in his salary from \$1,800 to \$1,000 per annum. The school was accordingly begun, and it became very successful, being attended by about eighty pupils.

In regard to this school and the Sunday School, then under the supervision of Mr. W. H. Strauss, the School Committee reported to the Council as follows:

Your Committee on Schools has visited the institution under the charge of our pastor, the Rev. G. D. Bernheim, and beg leave to submit this, their report. This being the first report of your Committee on this Seminary for boys and girls, established at the earnest solicitation of our congregation, we concluded to make a full and detailed statement of its different branches, which we thought you desired. This religious instruction commences at 8½ A.M., when all the children in connection with our church, and others who may wish to attend, assemble together in the large room. After roll call our pastor opens school with reading a portion of Scripture, and prayer. Then follows the lesson in Bible history, taught by the principal.

At 9 A.M. the regular school exercises begin, and all the pupils are required to be present, then each department retires under the charge of its teacher to the respective room for instruction.

. In conclusion we do heartily recommend this institution of learning, and not only to the members of our church, but to all who may wish to give their children a good education and a moral training.

Our Sunday School is in a flourishing condition, provided with officers and teachers, and numbers at present over one hundred scholars, and would be increased if the little room would admit. Our Sunday School room is entirely too small, and we recommend that you provide in some way for this deficiency.

Respectfully submitted,

H. B. Eilers

H. Haar

Wilmington, N. C., January 30, 1877.

With reference to this report the editor of the *Lutheran Visitor* remarked, "We call attention to the very interesting report of the committee on schools in the St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran congregation in Wilmington, N. C. The effort to establish a good school under the control and patronage of the congregation has been so decidedly successful as to be just ground for congratulation to the congregation, and is worthy of imitation in other places where similar schools are needed."

But the many labors of Pastor Bernheim finally broke down his health. Upon advice of physicians he was granted an indefinite leave to visit his fatherland in Europe. He absented himself for four months during which time the Rev. F. P. Cook supplied the pulpit.

A few months after Dr. Bernheim's return from Europe he discovered that, although greatly benefited in health, he felt unable to continue his strenuous labors as pastor and teacher and, therefore, on December 1, 1877, tendered his resignation. However, upon being relieved of some of his teaching duties, and at the earnest solicitation of the congregation, he consented to remain. On the last Sunday of the year 1881 his second and final resignation became effective.

The first society of St. Paul's—the Dorcas Society—was organized in the summer of 1871. Mrs. G. D. Bernheim, wife of Pastor Bernheim, probably was its founder. It was a society of the ladies of the church whose purpose was "(1) to liquidate the debt of the church, and to render any other assistance which the wants of the church may demand; (2) to provide as our means will allow for any sickness or destitution among the ladies or children of our congregation."

The first officers of this organization were: President, Mrs. G. D. Bernheim; Vice-president, Mrs. H. B. Eilers; Secretary, Miss Lissette Bernheim; Treasurer, Mrs. H. L. Vollers.

The record of labors of this society would require a separate booklet. Evidences of its activity and kindness can be seen everywhere on the grounds and in the buildings of the church. Its history, like the life of Dorcas, is full of good works (Acts: 9, 36-39). Their names may not appear so frequently in its records as those of the men, but their labors and deeds, faith and fidelity shine even more brightly.

Contributions of money by the Dorcas Society to the various enterprises and benevolences of the church have been most significant. Among the earlier gifts of great value are the granite coping surrounding the church and parsonage and the kneeling benches formerly used. The present excellent pipe organ was largely paid for by contributions from the Dorcas Society. A major gift of recent years was a substantial contribution to the fund for a new Parish House building. The Calendar Club, organized by Mrs. John H. Rehder and sponsored by the Dorcas Society, has helped in considerable measure to raise the money for the various projects of the Society.

Beyond the raising of funds, the social and personal services of the Dorcas Society have been most outstanding. Its members made frequent visits to the sick and shut-ins and conveyed to these the weekly church flowers and occasional devotional literature. During the Christmas sea-

son personal visits were made to the Red Cross Sanitorium, the James Walker Memorial Hospital and the shut-ins. Food, fuel and money were provided in response to appeals of the needy.

Donations of new garments annually to the local Needle Work Guild of America was another activity of this Society. Among still other duties assumed by the ladies of this Society were the beautiful decorations featuring festive celebrations held in the church, and the weekly care of the altar.

From 1880 onward St. Paul's manifested a steady growth. Following the resignation of Pastor Bernheim, nine ministers have served the congregation. Their names and periods of service follow:

F. W. E. Peschau, D.D., March 3, 1882 to February 26, 1893.

Karl Boldt, D.D., November 19, 1893 to December 17, 1897.

Andrew G. Voigt, D.D., June 1, 1898 to September 30, 1903.

William A. Snyder, D.D., March 6, 1904 to July 21, 1912.

Frederick B. Clausen, D.D., October 16, 1912 to May 15, 1918.

John C. Seegers, D.D., July 1, 1918 to September 8, 1921.

Edwin F. Keever, D.D., January 1, 1922 to July 31, 1937.

Walter B. Freed, D.D., September 1, 1937 to September 1, 1948.

J. Frank Davis, D.D., December 1, 1948—.

The Rev. F. W. E. Peschau came to Wilmington from Nashville, Tenn., arriving on March 3, 1882. An event of considerable significance occurred shortly before his arrival. The Christian Association, organized on October 29, 1871, was dissolved and the accumulated money in its treasury (over \$1,000) was given to the congregation. At the same time the Dorcas Society contributed a large sum and, as a result, by the proper use of these funds, the church for the first time in its history was free from debt.

During Pastor Peschau's pastorate the greatly needed Luther Memorial Building was erected on the corner of Sixth and Princess streets at a cost of \$4,000, Messrs J. F. Stolter, L. Vollers and F. W. Ortmann acting as a building committee. This work was done in 1883 and 1884.

In 1882 a "Young Peoples Society" was organized; it flourished for several years. A "Jugend Verein" (Youth Society), organized in 1892 for those preferring the German language, prospered for about two years.

The constitution of the Sunday School was framed and adopted in 1886. In the year 1887 the Karrer-Schulken Fund was established by Miss Emma Karrer and Mrs. E. Schulken, in memory of Mr. K. D. Karrer and Mr. E. Schulken, Sr., the interest on the money placed

therein being designated for the support of the pastorate. This fund is still open to all who wish to leave the congregation some annual income.

Among the important incidents during Pastor Peschau's administration should be mentioned the purchase at a cost of \$1,800, and consecration, of the pipe organ in 1897, and the meeting of the United Synod of the South at St. Paul's Church in 1888. The sessions of this body proved highly instructive and interesting to the congregation.

On April 8, 1888, the Christian Association was reorganized by a group of twenty male members of St. Paul's, namely,

F. A. Bissinger	F. H. Krahneke
Chas. Bloome	H. F. Otten
John Bocher*	F. E. W. Peschau, D. D.
G. W. Borneman	C. W. Polvogt
J. H. Borneman	J. H. Rehder
H. J. Dinglehoff	E. Schulken
E. D. Fry	G. F. Seiter
H. H. Gieschen	W. H. Strauss
J. D. H. Klander	H. L. Vollers
P. M. Knobloch	H. H. Woebse

*—*It is thought by some this name should have been John Doscher.*

The purpose of the organization was to assist in upbuilding the congregation, in caring for the sick, and in burying the dead; to render help to strangers in our city, give aid to missions, assist young men who wished to become ministers of the gospel, and further in any way possible the upbuilding of the Kingdom.

A third congregational society, known as the "Mengert Mission Circle," was organized on October 2, 1889, its purpose being to create interest in mission work and raise funds for its support. Children as well as adults were admitted to its membership. The name of this society, recalling the labors of the first Pastor, fittingly commemorated his pastorate. It contributed greatly to the work of the Lutheran Church in the South as well as to the local work of St. Paul's. At a later day the word "Mission" was dropped from its title, this, however, not indicating any decrease in the interest of the society in missions. The first officers were, President, Mrs. H. Rehder; Vice-president, Mrs. H. A. Glameyer; Secretary, Miss M. Strauss; Treasurer, Miss A. Doscher.

The Mengert Society was later named "The Women's Missionary Society." Still later (in 1952) it was merged with the Dorcas Society and the "Young Women's Circle," which had been organized some years earlier. The merging of these societies thus formed an organization known as "The Women of the Church." To conform with the name

of the National Society, this name was later (in 1956) changed to "United Lutheran Church Women."

With the increase of Lutherans in Wilmington, it was thought desirable to open a Sunday School in the northern portion of the city. This work was begun on April 13, 1890, by Pastor Peschau, with Mr. C. W. Polvogt as superintendent who, with a group of able teachers, began the Sunday School. At the first meeting sixty-seven pupils were enrolled. In 1891 a lot was acquired on Fourth Street at a cost of \$1,000 and a chapel erected thereon costing \$1,950, the cornerstone of which was laid March 30, 1891. Thus was born St. Mathew's congregation. During the following year St. Mathew's was permitted to withdraw from the mother church, the latter waiving all claims, rights and titles thereto and wishing the young congregation Godspeed and blessing. St. Mathew's has prospered through the years and is doing noble work in the Lord's vineyard. Some years ago its site was changed from North Fourth Street to South Seventeenth Street.

In more recent years St. Paul's assisted in establishing Lutheran mission churches in several southeastern North Carolina communities, namely, Fayetteville, Goldsboro, Kinston, Kure Beach, New Bern, Raleigh and Rocky Mount.

After ten years of service Pastor Peschau tendered his resignation, the same becoming effective on the last Sunday of February, 1893.

Former Pastor G. D. Bernheim supplied the pulpit during the ensuing vacancy of eight months, and on August 15, 1893, the Rev. Karl Boldt of Charleston, S. C., was called to the pastorate. His installation as pastor occurred on January 21st of the following year.

The first event of importance during this pastorate was the introduction of the "Common Service." This service had been prepared by a joint committee of appointed members of the various Lutheran bodies in the United States and was based on the best Lutheran liturgies of the sixteenth century.

On January 10, 1894, St. Paul's experienced a serious loss in the destruction by fire of the Lutheran Memorial Building. Part of this building had been occupied by the parochial school, established in 1891, the hope and pride of the congregation. Its home was now destroyed and its pupils and teachers formed a mournful band. At this time the members of the Jewish Synagogue offered the use of their basement. However, as the vestry room in the church and a room in the parsonage were available, there was no need of accepting this kind offer. A few weeks after the fire a new and larger building was decided upon, the erection of which was soon accomplished at a cost of \$5,124.

Upon completion of the new building, the daily school flourished as never before. The church in general and many other individuals contributed large sums of money to its support. At one time as many as one hundred scholars attended its sessions, and its graduates were freely admitted to the colleges of the State. Later, however, the public schools of the city having attained a high grade of efficiency, it had to be discontinued for lack of support.

Up to this time the expenses of the congregation were met by pew rents (pews permitted to be occupied only by those paying the rent), monthly dues and plate collections. This source of income gradually proved insufficient to meet the financial needs of the church. After thoughtful discussion the "Apportionment System" was adopted. Under this system each member, after consultation with a committee, paid a weekly amount to the church, according to his means, and the pews became free. The new system, to meet the requirements of which a revision of the constitution of the church was necessary, proved remarkably successful and relieved the congregation from many trivial financial burdens. The first committee appointed to enter into consultation with the members regarding their gifts to the church consisted of Messrs. A. D. Wessell, M. G. Tienken, A. Smith, J. H. Rehder and F. W. Ortmann.

The congregation had looked forward to the day when one of its sons should enter the ministry and go forth to labor for the Lord. Mr. B. H. W. Runge had completed his studies at Mount Airy Seminary and was ordained as a minister on June 2, 1895. However, his health failed rapidly and on June 15th of the same year he was called to higher and more blessed labors. His memory will ever be cherished in St. Paul's as a young man of deep piety and culture.

Upon receiving an urgent call to his former pastorate in Charleston, S. C., Pastor Boldt tendered his resignation, the same becoming effective on December 17, 1897.

The Rev. A. G. Voigt, Professor of Theology at the Seminary in Newberry, S. C., succeeded Pastor Boldt, having been called by the congregation shortly before the resignation of the latter became effective. Pastor Voigt took charge of the congregation on June 1, 1898, and was installed June 19th. During his pastorate, and following his suggestion, it was decided to devote all plate offerings to the various missionary and educational causes of the United Synod. By this plan the beneficiary contributions of the church were materially increased, and thus St. Paul's congregation gradually became a more important factor in the work of the Lutheran Church in the South.

It was arranged during Pastor Voigt's administration to have services in German on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. During the Fall of 1901 a Luther League was organized to take the place of the Young Peoples Society of earlier years.

The fence which surrounded the property was replaced by a granite coping, the cost of this work, nearly \$1,000, being borne by the Dorcas Society, as already indicated.

In July, 1903, Pastor Voigt was elected Dean of the Theological Seminary of the United Synod at Mount Airy, Pennsylvania. His resignation as pastor of St. Paul's was accepted on September 30, 1903. During his pastorate the church had grown in breadth and vision. It had increased in liberality to the various causes at large, and had begun to feel greater responsibility in the work of the United Synod, and to think more of the mission work of the Lutheran Church in the world—its great opportunities and problems.

Following Pastor Voigt was the Rev. W. A. Snyder, who was called twice by the congregation, and feeling that it was the Lord's will he should come to Wilmington, after receiving the second call, he resigned the congregation in West Reading, Pa., and on March 1, 1904, assumed charge of St. Paul's Church.

During Dr. Snyder's pastorate the congregation had the pleasure of seeing the Rev. H. W. A. Hanson, one of her sons, enter the ministry. Dr. Hanson has been very successful in his chosen field, first serving as minister in Alleghany, Pa., and later in Harrisburg, Pa., and then for twenty-nine years, until his retirement a few years ago, as President of Gettysburg College.

In 1906 the Sunday School was graded, and at this time it was in a most prosperous condition. The various societies increased in size and efficiency. At the close of Pastor Snyder's pastorate in 1912 St. Paul's had a membership of 410 members in good standing.

At the annual congregational meeting in 1906 the pastor, having reference to the approaching Fiftieth Anniversary of St. Paul's, urged the congregation to appropriately commemorate the event. An appointed committee recommended the enlargement and embellishment of the church edifice. Great interest was manifested by the congregation as a whole in the enterprise. Money and memorials were freely given. A building committee, consisting of the following members, was named: Pastor Snyder; L. Hanson, President; H. L. Vollers, Secretary-Treasurer; H. E. Bonitz, Architect; J. G. L. Gieschen, C. W. Polvogt, M. G. Tienken and J. H. Rehder.

The committee displayed untiring energy and zeal. The congrega-

tion was exceedingly liberal, taking great interest in the work, and to the credit of St. Paul's may it be said that during this year (1907) when the building operations demanded large gifts, the contributions for beneficence exceeded those of any previous year in its history. The work of enlarging the church advanced rapidly. On September 15, 1907, the cornerstone was relaid, with appropriate ceremony, and on Septuagesima Sunday September 16, 1908, services in the enlarged and embellished church were begun.

In 1912 Pastor Snyder resigned and on October 16th of that year the Rev. F. B. Clausen began his pastorate. Under Dr. Clausen's leadership significant progress was made, especially in the Sunday School and in the work of missions. Miss Mamie Martens was sent by the Lutheran Church to Africa as a missionary. She had received special training in surgery at the Presbyterian Hospital in Charlotte, N. C., and was therefore able to serve both as doctor and nurse. After two years service she became ill and was returned to the United States on furlough. One and one-half years later she returned to Africa, but in 1925, her health having failed again, was forced to give up the work.

In 1917 St. Paul's young men began leaving for the front. In all, twenty-nine of them answered the call of their country. Following are their names:

George H. Avant	Louis A. Hanson
Marion Avant	Henry Harbers
William B. Beery	Herman J. Gerdes
G. W. Bellois	J. Henry Gerdes
Walter C. Boesch	Harry Merritt
William Borneman	John W. Neistlie
Carl J. Fick	Henry Nurnberger
Ferdinand Fick	John G. Oldenbittel
George H. Fick	E. A. Shands, Jr.
Raymond Fryer	J. H. Schnibben
Robert L. Fryer	LeRoy Schnibben
William F. Haar	M. F. Schnibben
Edward Hanson	Marc. G. Volk
Henry W. A. Hanson	Conrad B. Wessell, Sr.

Leonard Wessell

There were no gold stars on the beautiful flag presented to the church by the daughters of Mrs. Katherine Vollers. None of those in the military services of World War I from St. Paul's was even wounded, and for this remarkable circumstance the entire congregation is deeply grateful.

When Dr. Clausen was called to another field, the Rev. John C.

Seegers, D. D., accepted the pastoral care of St. Paul's, arriving in Wilmington about July 1, 1918.

During Dr. Seeger's pastorate another son of the church, Kenneth P. Otten, grandson of Dr. Peschau, a former pastor, entered the ministry. He was ordained at Wilkesbarre, Pa., and began his work as associate pastor of the Church of the Incarnation. The Rev. Otten has been very successful in his chosen field. He is now in the 26th year of his pastorate at St. John's Lutheran Church, 120 Melrose Ave., Melrose Park, Philadelphia, Pa.

In the summer of 1920 ten stained glass windows were added to the church. These windows are similar to four which were installed at an earlier time. It is almost impossible to do justice in words to St. Paul's fourteen memorial windows; they must be seen to be fully appreciated. Beginning with the window near the baptismal font on the west side of the church, and going along that wall toward the front, then along the east wall toward the back, they depict various incidents in the wonderful story of the life of our Saviour while on earth. It has been said that the memorial windows of St. Paul's are equal in beauty to those of any cathedral or church in the South. Their cost at the time of purchase is not definitely known, except that the total amount paid for the ten most recently installed, including the cost of installation, was \$7,100. Windows of this character are now very hard to obtain, and the present commercial value of St. Paul's may be safely estimated at \$50,000 to \$60,000.

Dr. Seegers' administration closed on September 8, 1921, and the congregation then extended a call to the Rev. Edwin F. Keever. Dr. Keever arrived in Wilmington November 11, 1921. He brought to his pastorate a wide experience as a missionary, pastor of the Church of the Redeemer, Utica, N. Y., army chaplain and religious teacher at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. Under his leadership and through the influence of his able preaching, a steady spiritual growth in St. Paul's was manifested. During his pastorate the "Lutheran Brotherhood" was organized, this society in some respects taking the place of the earlier "Christian Association." The objectives of the Brotherhood gradually crystallized into the "Six Objectives of the Whole Church," namely,

1. Win the unsaved for Christ.
2. Bring back the lapsed members.
3. Develop the church life of our boys.
4. Increase the attendance of men at the services.
5. Practice and promote Christian citizenship.

6. Meet the obligations of the church.

Number 3 of these objectives included the Boy Scout movement which was organized among St. Paul's boys several years ago. (A Girl Scout movement, sponsored by the Sadie Elizabeth Keever Bible Class, was organized in 1955).

Later, during Pastor Freed's administration, the name of the Brotherhood was changed to "The Men of the Church," and it continues to this day under that title as one of St. Paul's more important organizations.

Pastor Keever's was the longest of all the pastorates since the inception of the church, extending from January, 1922, to July, 1937.

Toward the close of his pastorate, St. Paul's congregation undertook the task of thoroughly renovating the church, many of the pews having become worn, the carpet threadbare, and the interior walls somewhat dingy. The contract for this work was awarded to the Rambusch Decorating Company of New York. The greater part of the work of renovation was completed in February, 1938, under Doctor Freed's pastorate at a cost exceeding \$16,000. A portion of the work as originally planned was omitted because of the great expense; this part, however, was completed several years later (1946) at an additional cost of several thousand dollars.

During Dr. Keever's administration two sons of St. Paul's, members of one family, entered the ministry: Dr. Carl Futchs graduated from the Seminary at Mount Airy, Philadelphia, Pa., in June, 1927. He was ordained by the Lutheran Ministerium of New York in 1927. He is at present Executive Secretary of the Lutheran Welfare Association of New Jersey and lives in Jersey City, N. J. Dr. John F. Futchs graduated from the same Seminary in 1930. His first pastorate was at Weatherly, Pa. Later he became identified with the Rocky Mountain Synod, serving as its President for a number of years. At last report he had accepted a call as pastor of St. Paul's Church, El Paso, Texas.

Because of his erudition, his long and varied experience as a Lutheran minister, and his winsome personality, Dr. Keever was held in the highest regard, not only by the members of his congregation, but also by the people of Wilmington generally. He served for many years as chaplain of Wilmington Post No. 10, American Legion, and of Wilmington Light Infantry. As an outstanding member of the Wilmington Exchange Club he was designated by his club as First Recipient of the Keever Citizenship Award, which the Exchange Club established in his honor when he reached the age of eighty-five.

Soon after Dr. Keever's resignation the congregation extended a call

to the Rev. Walter B. Freed of Greencastle, Pa., who accepted the call and arrived in Wilmington during August, 1937.

Pastor Freed soon recognized the inadequacy of the facilities of the growing Sunday School. He therefore urged the congregation to liquidate as rapidly as possible the debt incurred by the redecoration program and then to inaugurate a campaign for a new and more modern Parish House. Under his energetic leadership this movement soon got under way; funds were raised and plans made, and soon the new building, where the Sunday School and the various organizations of the church could meet, was an accomplished fact. The total cost of the new building was about \$46,000. At the time of its erection it seemed ample for all requirements in the foreseeable future, but the need for more room for the Sunday School is now becoming very apparent.

Another important development during Pastor Freed's administration was the establishment of the "Dr. Keever Memorial Fund." The purpose of this fund, commemorating the outstanding services of Dr. Keever to St. Paul's, is to supply financial aid to mission churches in southeastern North Carolina. When St. Paul's was young and weak, aid was given by other churches in the Synod; now St. Paul's is strong and is trying to repay the debt by giving aid to struggling young congregations.

Through Pastor Freed's efforts many names were added to St. Paul's membership roll. He labored in Wilmington for eleven years and then accepted a call to St. Mark's Church in Charlotte, N. C. At present he is Pastor of Luther Place Memorial Church, Washington, D. C.

It is of interest to note here that Pastor G. D. Bernheim who organized St. Paul's Church in Wilmington one hundred years ago also organized, just two months earlier, St. Mark's Church in Charlotte.

Soon after the attack upon Pearl Harbor by the Japanese, December 7, 1941, and the participation of the United States in World War II, one of St. Paul's daughters and one hundred and nine of St. Paul's sons entered the military services of the nation. Their names are listed below:

George T. Ahrens, Jr.
E. Fred Banck, Jr.
William B. Beery, III
Samuel Behrends, Jr.
William B. Bellois, Jr.
Henry E. Benton
Marvin Benton
Raymond A. Bland
Carlton M. Bolton

Harlee E. Bordeaux
J. E. Bordeaux, Jr.
H. D. Borneman
L. B. Borneman, Jr.
Henry M. Bremer
T. W. Bremer
Herbert Brooks
Alfred W. Brunjes
Martin A. Brunjes

Thomas H. Brunjes
William Brunjes
Lewis Bryan
A. Fred DeVere
Charles W. DeVere
Fred W. Dock
John Dodge
R. A. Dunlea, Jr.
Howard J. Dunn
Russell D. Dyches
J. B. Edwards, Jr.
Robert Edwards
W. Eugene Edwards
Edward L. Funderburg
John B. Funderburg, Jr.
Richard H. Futchs
Lem A. Gee
Nicholas H. Gieschen
Emory N. Grubbs
Earnest W. Habenicht
Clarence E. Hales
John W. Hales
Lloyd E. Hales
Louis Hanson
Louis A. Hanson, III
James B. Heidt
Roger W. Hewlett
John P. Ittner
Clifton H. Jenne
Raymond R. Jenne
E. S. Johnson
James W. Johnson, Jr.
Earnest M. Klander
J. E. Koch
F. M. Kreichbaum
Joseph H. Lea, Jr.
Carroll Lippard
J. W. Loughlin
Tom E. McCraw, Jr.
Andrew J. Mahler
G. C. Mahler
Charles Mahlke, Jr.

Billie L. Mason
Carl Mason
Eddie F. Mathis, Jr.
August L. Meyland, Jr.
Fred Michaelis
Frederick A. Mohr
Frederick W. Mohr
Robert Mohr
George Nurnberger
Henry M. Pickard
John G. Pickard
W. A. Pieper
S. Davis Polvogt
Tom. B. Polvogt, Jr.
Bernard G. Raftery
C. Burke Rehder
George S. Rehder
Henry B. Rehder
John A. Rehder
Katherine E. Rehder
William S. Rehder
Robert E. Roudabush
W. P. Roudabush, Jr.
O. T. Royal
D. J. Rulfs
Charles M. Sanders
Charles L. Schnibben
T. E. Schnibben
E. A. Shands
J. S. Shepard
Herbert Slack
William E. Spencer
David L. Struthers
Earnest O. Tienken
Frederick Tienken
J. G. W. Tienken
T. J. Tobiason
B. B. Vickery
Ralph Volk
Henry M. VonOesen
W. F. Wagner
John E. Walker

Robert M. Walker
Conrad B. Wessell, Jr.
Hardy S. Wessell

Leonard P. Wessell
John C. Wrede, Jr.
W. C. Yarborough, Jr.

L. H. Yost

Richard Davis was killed in action in 1944.

A few months after Dr. Freed's resignation, the congregation called the Rev. J. Frank Davis of Augusta, Ga., to the pastorate. Dr. Davis accepted the call, arriving in Wilmington in November, 1948, and he is at present St. Paul's pastor. During his administration the lot adjoining the church property on Princess Street was acquired at a cost of \$12,000, the Sunday School rooms were renovated, and the Kindergarten was begun under two able teachers, Mrs. W. R. Bradsher and Mrs. L. G. Begor. Also the church has been air-conditioned, this work involving an expenditure of about \$12,000, and a new parsonage has been acquired at a cost of \$28,125.

A few years ago a Wednesday Church School was established for the instruction of the young people, under the very able direction of Mrs. C. B. Wessell and her group of teachers. This school is an outgrowth of the former children's missionary society known as the "Light Brigade."

On June 6, 1952, a Service Center for men in the armed forces of the United States was set up by Pastor Davis, under the auspices of the National Lutheran Council. Soldiers from military establishments near New Bern, N. C. and Jacksonville, N. C., made frequent visits to the Center and availed themselves of the opportunities there offered for wholesome entertainment. The Service Center continued active for three years.

Dr. Davis has been very active among the members of the church and has succeeded in greatly strengthening the various organizations. He has also fostered a spirit of evangelism among his flock. The Congregational Welfare and Evangelism Committee has been formed to aid him in his visits to the members of the congregation and among recent arrivals in the city who may have Lutheran leanings or Lutheran background. Work along this line, begun within the past year, promises to accomplish much good.

Our history of the First One Hundred Years now closes. From a beginning as a mission church in 1858 with only seventy-two charter members, St. Paul's congregation has grown to a membership of eight hundred. More than four hundred pupils, teachers and officers are enrolled in its Sunday School. It possesses today, on an ideal site, free from debt, a beautiful church edifice, with excellent, although becoming gradually inadequate, auxiliary buildings. As with all human history, the narrative has been woven very largely around the names

of leading members of the church—pastors, teachers, officers and councilmen. Many others, however, both men and women, still living or having gone to their eternal reward, have toiled with patience and given cheerfully of their worldly possessions through the long century that their church might live and grow. Though their names have not been recorded, let us not fail to remember, with thankfulness, their noble deeds; and may we, the present membership, encouraged by their example, continue our labors for the church which they founded and established, so that the future of St. Paul's, by the grace of Almighty God, may be even more fruitful than the past.

APPENDIX

Significant dates in the history of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wilmington, N. C.

- 1858—May 31, Congregation organized
- 1858— Sunday School organized
- 1859—Jan. 6, First Church Council elected
- 1859—Mar. 27, Church constitution adopted
- 1859—Sept. 6, Cornerstone laid
- 1859—Apr. 30, St. Paul's admitted to the North Carolina Synod
- 1869—Aug. 22, Church edifice completed and dedicated
- 1871—1873 Parsonage built
- 1871—Oct. 29, Christian Association organized
- 1871—Summer Dorcas Society organized
- 1876—Fall Parochial school opened
- 1883—1884 Luther Memorial Building erected
- 1886— First pipe organ installed
- 1889—Oct. 2, Mengert Mission Circle organized
- 1890—Apr. 15, St. Mathew's Mission Sunday School organized
- 1894—Jan. 10, Luther Memorial Building burned and rebuilt within
a few months
- 1901—Fall Luther League organized
- 1907—Sept. 15, Cornerstone for enlarged church laid
- 1907— Second pipe organ installed
- 1921— Lutheran Brotherhood organized
- 1937— Church renovated
- 1937—Nov. 2, Renovated church dedicated
- 1938—Spring Sadie Elizabeth Keever Class organized
- 1938—Oct. 26, Young Women's Circle organized
- 1939—Apr. 23, 80th Anniversary of formation of congregation observed
- 1939— Parsonage remodeled
- 1940—1941 New Parish House built
- 1941 Children of the Church organized
- 1944—Aug. 20, 85th Anniversary observed
- 1944— Organ electrified
- 1946— Interior of church remodeled
- 1948— Parsonage remodeled
- 1949— Kindergarten organized
- 1956— Bellamy lot purchased
- 1956— Church air-conditioned
- 1958— New parsonage purchased

It is of interest to note that Mrs. Eliza Schulken (nee Miss Eliza Adrian) served most capably and almost continuously at the console of the organ for about 55 years—a remarkable record of faithful service.

A word should be said here about St. Paul's Senior Choir. Many of its present members have for many years freely offered their musical talents. St. Paul's appreciates these faithful services.

The young people in the Cherub, Junior and Youth choirs are being trained, and in years to come many of them will do their part as leaders in the singing of the church.

Mrs. Katherine Vollers, one of St. Paul's older members, was baptized prior to the dedication of the church, and Mrs. Katie Freimuth, another of the older members, was baptized in the church on the day of dedication, August 22, 1869. We salute and honor them.

In addition to the five sons of St. Paul's who became ministers in the Lutheran Church, three of her daughters have married Lutheran ministers:

Florence Marie Wessell, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Wessell, married the Rev. Henry J. Pflum, A.M., D.D., pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Allentown, Pa.

Marie Catherine Dreher, daughter of the late Dr. and Mrs. J. H. Dreher, married the Rev. George C. Ackerly, pastor of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Christ, Rosedale, L. I., New York.

Mary Catherine Bissinger, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Bissinger, married the Rev. John W. Rilling, D.D., pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

Approximate Membership of St. Paul's by decades

1858 to 1870	— 141
1871 to 1880	— 310
1881 to 1890	— 360
1891 to 1900	— 379
1901 to 1910	— 385
1911 to 1920	— 446
1921 to 1930	— 487
1931 to 1940	— 497
1941 to 1950	— 675
1951 to 1958	— 661

Membership on March 31, 1958, was 803

Mr. Louis Hanson, Sr., General Chairman of the One Hundredth Anniversary Committee, is the son of the late Mr. Louis Hanson, who was General Chairman of the Fiftieth Anniversary Committee in 1908.

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Mr. J. W. Jackson, Co-chairman

MUSIC

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Mr. C. D. Gurganus, Co-chairman

BROCHURE

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HISTORY

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Mr. Paul Hess, Co-chairman

Mr. J. Henry Gerdes

Mrs. Paul Hess

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Miss Margaret G. Banck

Mr. Rudolph Konig

ERRATA

Page 6—The names of the Trustees of the first council are:

J. G. Bauman, H. B. Eilers,
H. VonGlahn, E. Schulken,
C. H. Vollers and H. Vollers.

Page 8—The name Carolina Wilkins should be Caroline Wilkins.

Page 31—The name of Ludolf C. Mugge should be added to the list of members of St. Paul's who entered the Military services during World War I. Total number who served, 30.

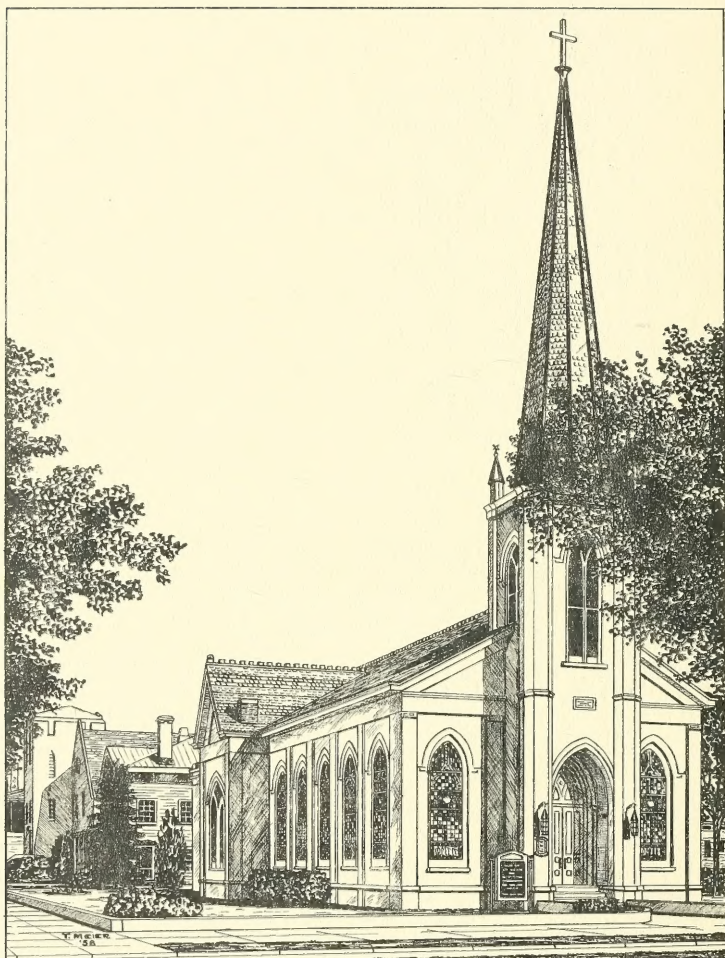
Page 34—The Dr. Keever Memorial Fund was established during Pastor Davis' administration.

Page 44—Addition to the Anniversary Committee:

FINANCE . . .

A. B. Cheatham, Chairman
W. E. Edwards, Co-chairman

Front cover sketch shows the building as it appeared in the 1860's. Back cover is as it appears in 1958. Drawings by F. LeM. Meier, Jr.



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